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PARTICIPANTS: Col. Carlos H. Cerdá, Sub-Secretary for
Legal and Technical Matters, Office of
the Presidency
Mr. Maxwell Chaplin, Deputy Chief of Mission,
American Embassy, Buenos Aires
Mr. Anthony G. Freeman, Acting Political
Counselor, American Embassy, Buenos Aires

DATE & PLACE: -January 17, 1980, DCM's Residence

SUBJECTS : US-Argentine Relations in the Light of the
Soviet Aggression in Afghanistan and US
request for Trade Restrictions Against
the USSR

In a three-hour conversation Cerdá made the following points:

- He expressed annoyance over the US penchant for dictating to the Argentines and automatically expecting the Argentines to toe the line.
- He asserted that if only President Carter had telephoned President Videla beforehand to enlist GOA support on grain restrictions the result would have been different.
- However, there should be no doubt about the basic anti-Soviet and anti-Marxist posture of the GOA.
- He asserted that the OAS human rights report was of much greater concern to the GOA than the UN Human Rights Commission session.
- The UNHRC is manageable because it is a political body. GOA already has Soviet bloc support and support from the NAM countries. The basic problem is the US and Western European countries.
- He expressed disappointment with the US member of the IAHRRC, Tom Farer. He, Cerdá, had gone out of his way to cultivate Farer and thought that Farer had understood the Argentine predicament. However, the IAHRRC report is unacceptable to the GOA, the Commission "hardliners" having edged out the "moderates" 4-3, with Farer voting with the majority in favor of a harsh, "unfair" draft report.

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--He asserted that Argentina's most important human rights question was resolving the status of PEN prisoners being held without trial or charges. There is an irreducible number of 600-700 hard-core terrorist incorrigibles against whom there are not sufficient charges which would stand up in a court of law without endangering clandestine informants who have infiltrated the terrorist organizations. He implied there are perhaps 200 or 300 PEN detainees who will be released from PEN. He invited "realistic" US suggestions for dealing with the problem of the incorrigibles.

*Through the
Looking-Glass
again...*

--He stated that the GOA was interested in high-level talks with the US, but it wished to discuss all the major issues in dispute between the two countries -- not merely human rights. This included nuclear cooperation and some economic issues.

--He reiterated that what the GOA wanted to know was how the US viewed the GOA.

--The US should support the GOA's efforts towards democratization.

--He observed that the Grain Board's Export Registry had not yet been reopened, but did not amplify.

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CLEARANCE:

DCM: MChaplin *(in draft)*

A/POLCOUNS: AGFreeman:jk

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